

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. issued today the following statement regarding the arrest of Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich on federal corruption charges.

"I was shocked and saddened today to learn that Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich was arrested by federal law enforcement officials. I am learning of the details from the unfolding and astonishing news reports about the corruption charges.

"If these allegations are proved true, I am outraged by the appalling, pay-to-play schemes hatched at the highest levels of our state government. Sadly, today's criminal complaint casts another dark, wide cloud over our state. The people of Illinois deserve better.

"As reported, I met with Governor Blagojevich at the state building in Chicago for the first time in years. During yesterday's 90-minute meeting, I shared with the Governor my hopes and unique qualifications for succeeding President-elect Barack Obama in the U.S. Senate.

"I've worked to make this ongoing senate selection process more open, transparent and merit-based. So, I'm deeply concerned that this process may have been tainted.

"Now, the Governor's fate is in the hands of the justice system. As the process plays out, I hope that everyone involved will cooperate fully and completely with the federal government's investigation. In the weeks and months ahead, his future should ultimately be determined in the court room and not the newsroom."